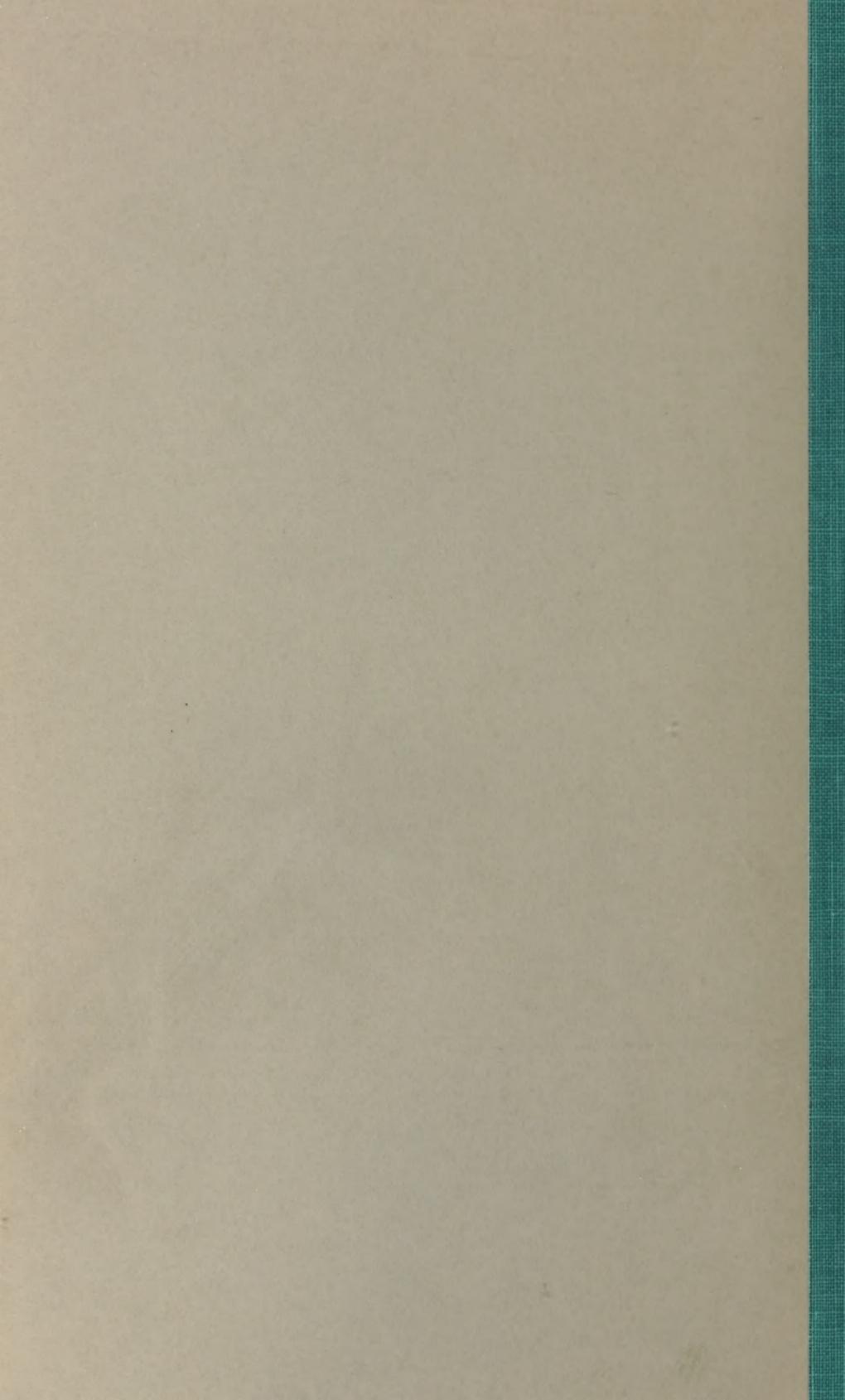


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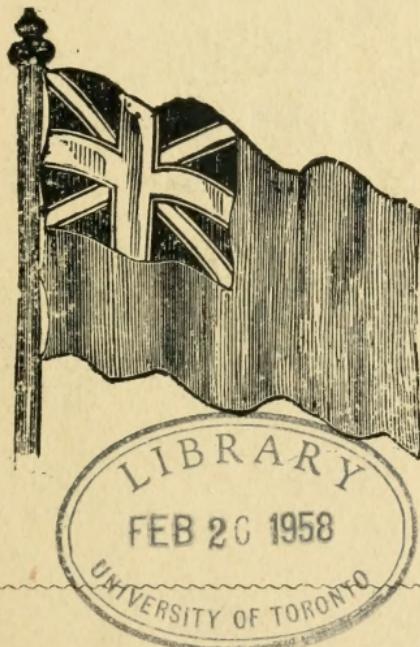
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# Township of Oneida

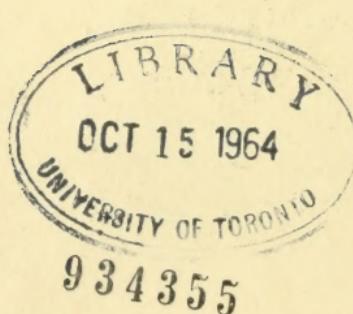
*Events Occurring In the Years*

**1820—1920**



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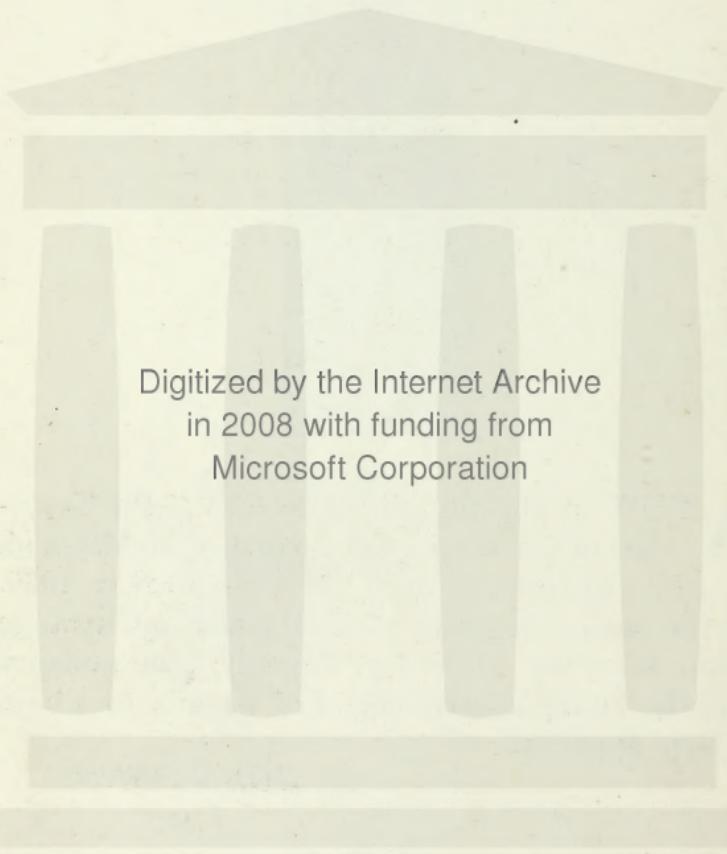
## *Indian*



A FEW of the prominent events of the Township of Oneida, in the County of Haldimand, Province of Ontario, from the year 1820 to 1920, as the author has been able to collect and arrange them from the Township Records, from memory and the kindly contributions of friends to whom I have appealed.

*JOHN SENN.*





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**W**E are making history every day, but by our indifference and failure to write down important events as they occur we lose many interesting facts that would be read by the present generation and be eagerly devoured by many in years to come.

There are records kept of certain events that transpired in the past; but these are only accessible to a few people, and many things of the past are lost, and many more will be by the departure of the prominent men and women who played important parts in their various spheres of life, in whose minds were the only records made.

I desire to give, in a readable form, some accounts of the early settlement of the Township of Oneida, with the hope that an indulgent public will be interested in the facts. If not satisfied with the literary effort, I make no claim to any ability, and only write to preserve and present these facts that I have acquired in different ways.

I want to thank a generous public for the kindly aid so freely given, as they have allowed me access to records in the Registry Office, to private papers and photographs in their homes and to facts stored in their memories. I regret very much that more photos of early prominent men are not available, as they would have added to the interest of the book if they were reproduced here.

In A. D. 1784 Sir Frederic Haldimand, from whom the county took its name, was Lieutenant Governor of Upper Canada.

He made a grant of land on each side of the Ouse, or Grand River, six miles wide, from Lake Erie to the present City of Brantford, to the Six Nation Indians, or Iroquois.

This land was purchased from the Chippewas by the Government and given to the Six Nations as a partial reward for their adherence to the British Crown, and in lieu of their reserves along the Genessee River, lost to them by their loyalty.

Joseph Brant, the faithful and able chief, or leader of the Six Nation Indians, when he looked over this grant of land was pleased with its resemblance to their former hunting grounds, and with the settlement of his band here he persuaded a few of his former friends in the war just ended to come and settle with them. He gave them blocks of land to settle on, making them "Brant's Leases," for 999 years, asking from them a rental of one "Pepper Corn" per annum, if demanded by the Six Nation Indians.

Subsequent years have proved the value of this gift, and the wisdom of the selection. Along the river forming the boundary line between Seneca and Oneida there was located a number of people forming what was known as "The Nelles Settlement," as a large grant of land was "leased" to men by the name of Nelles; but only 325 acres was west of the River, or in Oneida, leased to John Nelles. Near this grant one of 460 acres was made to Robert Anderson; one to William Cook of 339 acres, including an island in the river of  $2\frac{1}{2}$  acres; another to William Dennis of 378 acres, and a large one to Thomas Runchey. J. H. McKenzie and M. J. McKenzie of 845 acres, with a special clause in the lease "That they should have all lands west of their mill overflowed by the water the dam backed up."

This block of land was named "Ardross" after the home in Scotland of McKenzie Bros.

The Indians occupied this reserve until the year A. D. 1832, when it was surrendered to the Government for a sum of money that was placed to their credit, and the interest accruing distributed to them half yearly.

They, however, retained a strip of land in Oneida a mile and a half wide on the western boundary, from the Grand River to the Walpole Line. This contains about 8,000 acres, on which a large number of Indians still reside, prosperous and contented.

The Township of Oneida, as now formed, has 32,500 acres of land.

Very little can be found of the early history of the Township, except that a few families lived on little plots of land cleared by them; but it is a fact that 100 years ago—1820—it was practically an unbroken forest, where the Indians roamed and subsisted by hunting and fishing.

Bears, deer and numerous other animals were plentiful.

There are two creeks in the Township—"Lah quan-yah"—where once the speckled trout lived, and the McKenzie Creek, formed by the junction of the Boston and McKenzie branches that had a more plentiful supply of the coarser varieties of fish.

These gave them an abundance of seasonable food.

A western writer says, poetically, that—

As the speckled troutling sickens,  
When from trees the streams are cleared,  
So from civilizing sunbeans  
Have the Indians disappeared.

And with the retirement of the Indian the trout and some other varieties of fish, and practically all the wild animals have disappeared.

Where the wigwams, or huts of the Indians once stood now comfortable houses are erected, where bright, happy boys and girls play. The forest has given place to fertile fields, the awe-inspiring giant trees no longer stand defying the wintry blast; but shade and ornamental trees stand in the fields and around the pleasant dwellings, while the many orchards laden with fruit and in its season, present an imposing spectacle.

The peaceable, profitable domestic animals grazing or lying contented in the fields are surely a nicer sight than the savage wolves, bears, etc., or even the timid deer.

It has been difficult to find out when the boundaries of the Township of Oneida were formed at first and by whom.

It is evident that certain lines were drawn that were taken for the limits of the Township, and settlers took possession of certain lots, clearing the land and building log houses; some of them on what is now known as the Reserve, who were afterward ejected, losing what improvements they had made. Although they made strong protests, presenting claims to the Government, which were disputed and never paid.

Some pathetic cases were reported of families living and working for years, who were forced to leave their improvements and establish homes elsewhere nearly destitute. In fact, an item appears in the Treasurer's Account of the payment of a sum to a man as a pauper who was driven from his clearing.

On June, 1842, an official plan of Oneida, on the Grand River, made by William Walker, Deputy Surveyor, was filed in the Surveyor General's Office, Kingston.

In the copy we have from the Department of Indian Affairs the blocks of land and acreage is given, and the lots numbered in the different concessions, with the amount of land in each lot.

The names of the men who had settled on these lots also are shown. Besides the owners of blocks mentioned 24 settled along the River, 14 along McKenzie Road, and 3 on the Plank Road, as follows:

On the Plank Road—L. Smith, T. Harris, J. Millard.

Along the McKenzie Road—J. McDonald, Sherlock, J. Dalton, R. Nichol, T. Nichol, Thomas Galer, R. Matchett, J. T. Law, J. Lawrence, Thomas Dalton, T. Brown, J. Kennedy, P. Robinson.

Along the River—W. Doxstader, Peart and Martindale, Thomas Wren, Alex. Kennedy, Andrew Murray, A. Nelles, Philip Nelles, J. Pearson, Charles Nelles, William Young, David Young, P. Wintermute, W. Brown, M. Brown, C. Bain, Thomas Button, Lewis Walker, J. Isaac, D. Doyle, and I. Dixon.

The best municipal authority in Ontario gives the date when the Boundaries of Oneida were defined by Act of Parliament, as Session of 21st of Victoria, or 1857.



## Resources

ONEIDA possessed many natural resources, valuable timber, immense trees of oak, pine, walnut, maple, beech, basswood and other varieties, everywhere stood upon the land.

The pine and oak represented much wealth, and while some of it was destroyed and wasted, large quantities were sold, and the amount cut in lumber and timber for building and fencing materially assisted the heroic and needy settler.

In order to clear the land for the crops so necessary for the early settler, many valuable trees were logged and burned that would now bring good prices, but this was unavoidable.

In different places "saw mills" were erected which cut the lumber for local uses and for shipping to outside points.

Beside the mills outside the Township there was Donaldson's at Mt. Healy; Anderson's on the Creek at Anderson's Dam; Mutchmore's on the Plank Road; Runchey's at the "Mill Pond;" J. T. Mutchmore's at Ballsville; Gibson Bros. & H. Stewart on the Plank Road, and other small ones.

Large quantities of lumber were put on "scows" or large flat bottomed boats and sent to Brantford, Buffalo, etc.

This history would not be complete if it did not mention the Runchey Bros., who built and owned some of these "scows" capable of floating large loads of lumber and other goods.

They "towed" these loaded boats up or down the river to the different markets. A large, long rope was fastened to the scows and two or more horses hitched to the rope; they would walk along a "tow path" drawing these loads.

At different places along the river dams were built and "locks" were formed where the water could be let in or out to raise or lower the boats to the levels formed by the dams.

This was a slow and tedious way of marketing the lumber, but cheaper than any way then known.

Another method of disposing of this lumber was also found: Great numbers of logs were cut during the winter and drawn to the banks of the creek and laid on hill sides until the creek was cleared of ice in the spring, when they were loosened and rolled into the water, floating down to "boom" chained across the creek. Here they were straightened and fastened together in large rafts, then moved down the river to where they were sawn. In floating these logs down the creek some were forced on the bank and lodged, but these were followed by expert raftsmen and rolled into the current again.

A familiar and prominent figure in those days was "Charlie Brooks," a clever raftsman, who led a gang, clearing the stream. Mr. Brooks still lives in York, having passed the century mark a number of years ago.

Cordwood was also cut and sold. Long piles were made along the river and boated away during the summer, and many cords teamed to Hamilton and along the Railway Lines for fuel. This was a hard but profitable way of disposing of the timber. Very little wood of any kind remains.

In different places there has been found a valuable commodity, viz.: Gypsum or Plaster of Paris. This seems to have been reserved by the Government in their patents issued, but in A. D. 1839 a Duncan McFarlane obtained a patent for the Gypsum Quarries, which he afterwards sold to different men who operated these quarries very profitably.

Donaldsons and Martindale's at Mt. Healy and York did a great business for a number of years. I can still remember seeing many teams at Mt. Healy waiting to have their boxes filled with ground plaster, to be used in the spring as a fertilizer on peas, clover and other leguminous crops.

This Gypsum, mined back in drifts under the grounds, was drawn to the surface and laid in piles on the piers and in the plaster houses, and from these boated or drawn by teams to Mt. Healy, York and Taylor's Mills and ground very fine.

In early days I saw large piles of rock plaster lying at the stove-house and on the piers at the river side, and at Mt. Healy.

There is also a quarry at Carson's Farm, and another at Mutchmore's Farm, as well as quantities in other places not mined. A firm from the United States has purchased these different quarries



*MR. & MRS. J. DONALDSON  
District Councillor and Builder of Mount Healy.*

and erected a large mill at Lythmore, where they are manufacturing and selling in different forms this product for building and other purposes.

In the southeast part of the Township there are valuable quarries of stone—free stone and lime stone—some of it being used for building, and much has been shipped away by a firm in Brantford, who had a railway switch built to certain quarries they had bought.

There has also been in operation a "Sand Plant," owned and operated by a firm from Buffalo, that prepared by crushing and washing the stone a very fine sand resembling white sugar, used in the manufacture of a superior kind of glass.

While Oneida is not reckoned a good "gas field," considerable quantities of gas has been found in wells drilled about six hundred feet deep. These wells supply many homes with fuel and light, and some is shipped in pipes and sold.

But the most important asset we have is the wealth found in the different classes of soil. This wealth is being extracted and enjoyed by as intelligent and industrious a class of men and women as can be found in any country.

And who deserves this wealth more than the present generation of farmers' sons and daughters, who have inherited from these sturdy pioneers of Oneida the vigor and sterling qualities they possessed, and who are carrying on the work their parents handed over to them.

The product of the farms offered to the world in the form of wheat, coarse grains, hay, meat and dairy products, find a ready and profitable sale.

The splendid houses, farm buildings, autos, bank accounts, etc., possessed by farmers generally, prove that industry and intelligence are reaping a rich harvest from a fertile soil.



DENNIS' LOG HOUSE,  
*Over 100 Years Old.*

## Municipal

THE first record of Municipal Organization in Oneida is dated January 1, 1844, when a meeting was held in a School House at Anderson's Creek, south of the Anderson home.

This meeting was called in pursuance of an order from David Thompson and Andrew Thompson, Esqs., two of Her Majesty's Justices of the Peace for the District of Niagara.

John Stewart was Chairman of the Meeting, and afterward elected Town Clerk.

John Donaldson was elected Township Councillor.

Robert Anderson, William Young, John Mutchmore were elected Town Wardens.

John Anderson, Assessor.

James Thorburn, Collector.

Five men, called School Commissioners, were elected, viz.: John Mutchmore, James Thorburn, William Cranston, William Young, John I. Law.

A list of eighteen Pathmasters, four Poundkeepers, three Fence-viewers were appointed.

The first law of the Township was formed prohibiting certain animals from running at large, and regulating the height of lawful fences.

It is interesting to see the signatures of the officers in the Township Book, where they had subscribed the declaration, promising to diligently and faithfully perform the duties of their respective offices.

The Clerk reported February 1, 1844, to the Justice of the Peace the names of ten men who failed to sign the declaration of office.

The first money paid to the Township Clerk, who acted as Treasurer, was 4 pounds, 13 shillings, 8 pence currency, wild land tax for 1843. This amount was paid to Robert Anderson, who was authorized to open up the road along the river from his farm to the Plank Road at Caledonia.

At the first meeting of the Council the First Division of the High-ways was assigned to the appointed Pathmasters.

James Thorburn, Collector, paid into the Township Clerk School Tax, 35 pounds, 10 shillings, all the money collected.

In the Common School account for 1844 there is an item for building four school houses of 27 pounds, 6 shillings, 9 pence And the amount paid five teachers, which averaged 8 pounds, 6 shillings, 1 pence.

In 1845, on January 6, other Township Officers were appointed, but no record is made of a Councillor being appointed. And another meeting was held on May 1 in School District Number Three, to appoint a Councillor to represent them in the Gore District.

Two men were nominated: John Donaldson was nominated by Thomas Martindale, seconded by William Young; James Thorburn was nominated by George Raymond, seconded by Mark Sims.

A poll was demanded and taken by open vote. James Thorburn was elected, but failing to take the necessary declaration of office, was rejected by the Gore District Council that then met in Hamilton.

Voters and votes at First Election in Oneida in School House, Division Number Three, May 1, 1845:

<i>NAME.</i>	<i>Donaldson.</i>	<i>Thorburn..</i>
George Raymond ...	...	1
Mark Senn ...	...	1
John Pearson ...	...	1
William Young ...	...	1
Thomas Martindale ...	...	1
John Young ...	...	1
Philip Wintermute ...	...	1
John Harper ...	...	1
John Knox ...	...	1
William Bell ...	...	1
Edmund Young ...	...	1
Peter Wintermute ...	...	1
Nathaniel Dennis ...	...	1
Robert Anderson ...	...	1
John Mutchmore ...	...	1
John Murray ...	...	1
Thomas Peart ...	...	1
John Nelles, Sr ...	...	1
Adam Beam ...	...	1
William Dennis ...	...	1
Samuel Wedge ...	...	1
John Lawrence ...	...	1
Charles Barber ...	...	1
James Matherell ...	...	1
John O'Hara ...	...	1
Isaiah Cramer ...	...	1
John Mitchell ...	...	1
John Dochstader ...	...	1
John Anderson ...	...	1
Jacob Sims ...	...	1
William Hamilton ...	...	1
	—	—
	7	24

On June 4, 1845, a meeting was held to fill this vacancy. Robert Anderson, John Donaldson and John Cook were the candidates. Robert Anderson was declared elected, and served for the balance of the year and the whole of 1846, with John Mutchmore, William Young and John Lawe, Town Wardens.

On January 4, 1847, at 10 a.m. a warrant was read, asking that two District Councillors be appointed. Four men were nominated: James Little, James Thorburn, Robert Anderson, William Young. Another open vote was taken, when James Little and James Thorburn were elected, each having received sixty-three votes.

On January 3, 1848, in the School House at Anderson's Creek a meeting of the "Inhabitant Freeholders and Householders" was held.

James Little and James Thorburn were again elected District Councillors.

James Carter was appointed Clerk in place of John Stewart, who

was removing to an adjoining township. Robert Anderson, John Mutchmore and John Lawson were elected Wardens.

It was decided then that all future meetings of the Council should be held at the centre of the Township.

In this year the records were made of marks upon the ears of cattle, sheep, and swine, by which their owners might identify and claim these animals.

January 1, 1849, at a meeting held at McClusky's Hotel, Plank Road, John I Law and James Thorburn were appointed Councillors, but Mr. Thorburn died shortly after, and on April 12 at McClusky's Hotel another meeting elected David Hager to fill the vacancy.

In 1850 a new law came into force, whereby each Municipality elected five men to manage all Township affairs.

On January 7, 1850, at Helm's Hotel, Plank Road, 12 candidates were nominated, and the Poll Book shows the names of the candidates and 279 voters, whose votes were divided, electing Philip Murray, Thomas Scott, John Donaldson, Robert Mahaffy and David Hager, Mr. Murray receiving 191 votes. I give the names of these settlers of 70 years ago, who did so much to make Oneida what it really is now, a Township of happy homes.

#### POLL LIST, 1850.

Names of men who voted for Councillors at Helm's Tavern, Plank Road, January 7, 1850:

John Jerome	James Thompson	Robert Young
William Bell	William Gaddes	James Mulligan
William Grant	John Phillips	Park Carpenter
Thos. Burns	John Pearson	John Howell
Chris. Bell	Robert Johnson	Miles Hoskess
Wm. Thompson	Samuel Murphy	Alfred McCartney
John Cook	Adam Johnson	Dan Cavanagh
John Campbell	Wm. Hamilton	Robert Kitt
Thos. Mussen	Ben. Connor	Leonard Foul
Wm. Fagan	James Agnew	John Howard
George Price	House Kennedy	John Smith
James Hall	Thomas Welsh	Edward Lindley
Pat. Nugent	John Armstrong	Wm. Bell
Thos. Martindale	Michael Doyle	Daniel Duffy
Itemas Turner	James Young	Robt. Turnbull
Philip Wintemute	Thos. Long	John Murray
Andrew Thompson	John McGarry	Jas. Gascoigne
Thos. Calverly	Alex. Hamilton	Wm. Stevenson
Robt. Walker	Wm. Herod	John Knox
Wm. Young	Geo. F. James	John McMonagle
John Fergerson	Peter Elder	Michael Below
Walter Murray	Alex. Rolston	John McConachal
Richard Thompson	James Gardner	Michael Murphy
Wm. McPherson	Wm. Morrow	Josh. Brown
Part. Davis	Wm. Gage	Timothy McMonagle
Nicholas Vanevery	Robt. McDonald	John Barker
John Holbrook	George Bungley	John Duffy
Peter Wintemute	Chas. McLaughlin	Corn. Clark
Wm. Thompson	John Hefferman	Hy. Phillips, Jr.
Geo. Lindley	Martin Whelan	Hy. Phillips, Sr.
Hugh Batten	Wm. Laing	James Ball
George Hunter	Wm. Lint	Dennis Murray

John Lennington	Geo. Walters	Adam Smith
James Laing	Richard Welsh	Ezra Cooper
Michael Dougherty	Wm. Clegg	Martin Kealey
Jas. Gillesby	David Nickerson	Andrew Munro
Hy. Jackson	Chas. Anderson	John Murray
Pat. Brim	David Anderson	Jonathan Mutchmore
Jas. Carr	Robt. Anderson	Hy. Doxtager
Jas. Fearman	Thos. Batten	Thos. Nicholas
Chas. Barber	John Carroll	Samuel McMonagle
Adam Thompson	Geo. Anthony	James Keer
Bernard McMonagle	David Kenney	Nathaniel Boags
John Jones	John Lawson	Thos. Owen
Michael Keaten	Martin Gill	Thos. Leach
John I. Young	Richard Newton	David Toine
John Kennedy	David Swezie	Lewis Walker
Wm. Welsh	Thos. Smith	Jas. Stewart
Robt. Cranston	James Runchey	Matthew Ellison
Thos. McMorrin	Ralph Mutchmore	John Olds
Jas. Smith	Jacob Waddle	Josh. Hunter
Wm. Cranston	John Cavanagh	Jacob Taggart
John Welsh	Wm. Nicholas	James Murray
Martin Higgins	Wm. Cranston	Wm. Cleutire
John Walten	John Robishaw	James Nelles
Tolasky Cooper	Daniel McGregor	Elias Partridge
Thos. Dalton	John Lawrence	John Rourk
John Griffith	Nealin Roberts	J. hn McDonald
Don. Melsaac	Robt. Lewis	James Leather
John Cranston	Mungo Thorburn	Peter Callum
John Anderson	Gowan Wren	James MaHerg
Geo. Cranston	George Greeros	Isaac Newton
Thos. Peart	Robt. Potter	Alex. Elliott
Walter Stevenson	John Darling	Jas. Dalton
Jas. Williamson	John Stewart	Hy. Lawless
Robt. Doxtager	Hugh Kennedy	Geo. Powell
Robt. McBride	Robt. Weston	Avane Helm
Ed. Rutherford	Evans Prought	John Machett
James Hunter	George Murray	Robt. MaHaffy
John T. Mutchmore	Hector Ball	Thos. Nicholas
Robt. Galer	Wm. Kenedy	Wm. Helm
Jos. Bogler	Wm. Carroll	Robt. Blain
Hugh Hagety	Thos. Galer	Edwd Lindley
Wm. Hume	Wm. Bougs	Jas. Hoskiss
Hy. Chambers	Thos. Runchey	John Mitchell
Pat. Farrel	James Youler	Peter Sagriff
Wm. Hunter	Duncan Forbes	Maxwell Carse
Phillip Nelles	Sam. Conklin	Thos. Scott
John Young	Robert Walker	Ed. Campbell
John Stark	John Stewart	Neas Booth
Wm. Forrest	David Hagen	Geo. Heggris
Chas. Kenedy	Sam. Waldrom	Wm. Prought
Wm. Iles	Peter Ostrayer	Geo. Styres
Land Fulton	Andrew Murray	William Downie
Phillip Murray	Jno. Donaldson	Jas. McKenzie
Jas. Thornton	Thos. Smith	Wm. Wilson
Wm. Stewart	Robt. Anderson	John T. Lawe
Daniel Forbes	Jno. Warner	Jesse Higgins
Geo. Phillips	James Hope	Levi Wing
Park McCusty	Wm. Young	

At the first meeting of the Council Robert Anderson and Alex. Scobie, two of the candidates, entered a "Protest against Robert MaHaffy and Thomas Scott taking their seats, on the ground of their not having sufficient qualification on real estate," and claimed the seats for themselves.

Mr. Carter, Clerk, evidently acted as Judge and Jury, and after dismissing the protests proceeded to "swear in" the men elected.

The elected Councillors were required to appoint one of their number as Reeve to preside over them. Philip Murray was selected and thus became the first Reeve of Oneida.

On February 8, 1850, the Council appointed John Anderson, Treasurer, and William Kennedy, Collector, and three Assessors—William Grant, Alfred McCartney and William Helm.

With the close of 1850 no further record of the Council Meetings can be found until 1862. It is generally understood that these records were burned.

From other sources I find that the following gentlemen were Reeve and Deputy as follows:

1851.....	Robert Young	1852.....	John Anderson
1853 .....	.Matthew Gill	1854 .....	M. Gill
1855.....	M. Gill	1856.....	W. Cook
1857.....	W. Cook	1858....J. T. Mutchmore	
1859....Mungo Thorburn		1860.....M. Thorburn	

A brief record of the Treasurer's work is found for 1856-1857, James Stewart being in that office. And in 1860 the name of Alex. Mutchmore is given as Clerk. In this year all entries of money is given in dollars and cents.

The names of the parties who paid, each, \$30 for licenses to sell liquor appears as follows: A. McDonald, Geo. Lindley, R. Dochstader, Wm. Helm, Mrs. Walsh, and H. J. Ince.

In 1862 William Mussen was appointed Reeve, and John Murray, Deputy. These selections were still made by the Councillors elected and of their own number.

Alex. Campbell was re-appointed Clerk at his former salary of \$60. There is nothing to show when he began his work as Clerk.

Sealed tenders were asked for the office of Assessor, John Madigan getting the work for \$26. The regular meetings of the Council were now held at Bell's School House.

There were nine meetings of the Council this year, and the Councillors received the munificent sum of \$13.50 each for their services.

The year 1863 William Mussen was again Reeve, and John Murray, Deputy.

Mr. Madigan's tender for Assessing was \$24 and was laid aside for that of James Hall at \$19.50.

A resolution had been passed that the offices of Clerk, Treasurer, Collector and Assessor be given to the lowest tender.

In 1864 Mr. Mussen and Mr. Murray was again Reeve and Deputy.

Caleb Lawson's tender for the Clerkship for \$47 was accepted; Alex. Thompson was the Assessor at \$20, and Charles Snell, Collector of Taxes, at  $2\frac{1}{2}$  per cent.

On June 25 of this year Mr. Lawson resigned his office as Clerk, and Henry J. Ince was appointed for the balance of the year at a salary of \$60 per annum. Mr. Ince continued to serve the Township in that capacity until January, 1885, when the present incumbent, John Senn, was given the work.

In 1865 Mr. Mussen and Mr. Murray was once more Reeve and Deputy; but in 1866 Councillors were elected in Wards, Five in number as follows:

Geo. Hunter	Ward 1, Gore
J. T. Mutchmore	Ward 2, Ballsville
Peter Grant	Ward 3, Town Hall
Jas. Madigan	Ward 4, Caledonia
Wm. Mussen	Ward 5, Mt. Healy

Mr. Mutchmore was appointed Reeve, and Geo. Hunter, Deputy. A new method of electing Reeves and Councillors began with 1867, and has continued ever since.

At the nomination meeting candidates were nominated for the offices of Reeve, Deputy and Councillors, and a week later a poll was taken if more than the requisite number was listed. Wm. Mussen was the first elected Reeve, and A. W. Thompson first elected Deputy Reeve.

It will doubtless suffice to give the names of the Reeves without mentioning the long list of able men who faithfully served as Deputies and Councillors in the years following:

In 1868-69-70	A. W. Thompson
In 1870 to 1877	Hugh Stewart
In 1878 to 1881	A. W. Thompson
In 1882 to 1886	Hugh Stewart
In 1887 to 1892	George Murray
In 1893 and 1896	James Laidlaw
In 1894 and 1895	Robert Rutherford
In 1897	Robert Creighton
In 1898	Patrick Fagin
In 1899 and 1900	Wm. F. Murray
In 1901 and 1902	Robt. Anderson
In 1903	Thos. Young
In 1904	Robert Harper
In 1905	James Carson
In 1906 and 1907	D. Z. Gibson
In 1908 and 1909	Alex. Dunnet
In 1910 and 1911	Robert Anderson
In 1912 to 1914	Thos. M. Kett
In 1915 to 1917	Allan Anderson
In 1918 to 1920	Wm. Doyle



WM. DOYLE, Esq.,  
Reeve, 1918-20.

In 1901 to 1904 David Kett represented the Township under the County Council Act.

In 1905 to 1906 Wm. J. Lang, under the same act; but these had no voice in Township affairs.

In 1870 the Town Hall was built on Abraham Lang's farm, as near the centre of the Township as possible, and all Township business is transacted there.

In 1912 a new hall was built, smaller, but neat and comfortable.

It is needless to say that there has been a steady and continuous growth in the taxes the ratepayers are called upon to pay, and a great responsibility rests upon the Collector, who is now required to collect County Taxes, all School Taxes, and whatever is required for Township expenditure. And a heavy and onerous duty is laid upon the Treasurer to receive this sum and pay it on the order of the Reeve and Clerk. The rate is not set for 1920, but in 1919 the total taxes collected were \$27,815.96.

In 1875 the Oneida Farmers' Mutual Fire Insurance Company was organized, issuing its first list of Policies on March 27 of that year.

A number of careful, thrifty leading men of the Township united to establish it, and after a period of 45 years it is still prosperous, and enjoys the confidence of nearly all the property owners in Oneida, and a portion of North Cayuga added to its constituency a few years later.

That a large amount of money has been saved by the Policyholders is generally conceded.

All the losses have been promptly paid; assessments are made as the losses occur, covering the actual expenses of the Company.

The first Board of Directors of the Company were: D. McGregor, Geo. Murray, Robert Smith, M. Gill, Robert Rutherford, D. H. Terryberry.

Donald McGregor was the first President.

John Senn was the first Secretary-Treasurer, serving until 1894, when David Kett was appointed.

Mr. Kett resigned in January, 1907, and Robert Anderson was called to fill the place until his death in 1911. F. R. Martindale succeeded him until January, 1915, when Mark C. Senn was elected and continues still in that place.

It would be interesting to compare the premiums paid by its Policyholders with the premiums demanded by other companies, as I am sure they would show a neat saving to the former since the establishment of the Company.

The Policy Register and Annual Returns of the Company, 1914, show a little over one and a half million dollars of property at risk, with \$46,490 of Premium Notes in force.

It has often been a query with the writer whether a Life Insurance scheme might not be devised and made to operate in rural municipalities, whereby a good deal of money could be saved.

## *Settlement*

THE Township of Oneida was opened for settlement by white people in the year 1832, when the Government had secured possession of the land from the Indians.

A few families had "squatted" on their leases and other places, clearing small strips of land along the creeks and river until the proclamation was made and the terms of sale published. Then a general rush took place, and selections were made as fast as the land was surveyed. Men and women from different lands, some with little or no experience, some just married came, resolved to bear the hardships and toil that must of necessity be their portion in establishing homes for themselves. These homes, or dwellings, were made of logs, not fancy houses, but warm and comfortable.

A verse I composed years ago, out of love and respect to my father and mother, seems to describe these early settlers :

Never truer hearts or braver  
Faced the forest wild and stern ;  
Nothing ever made them waver  
From their purpose, shrink or turn,  
Envied neither friend or neighbor.  
Belted earl or titled lord,  
Satisfied with love and labor,  
And its sure and rich reward.

The Government sold them their farms, making easy terms for the payment of the amount required.

Upon completion of the payments, "Patents," or deeds, were issued to these settlers.

The Brant leases, before mentioned, were honored after the land in the Reserve had been surrendered, and the first Patents issued to these leaseholders as follows is: Robert Anderson, Anderson Block, April 12, 1836; John Nelles, Nelles Block, May 16, 1836; William Dennis, the Dennis Block, April 29, 1836; to Wm. Cook, Cook's Block, February 26, 1838; to Geo. S. Tiffany, Patent for Ardross Block, September 3, 1838, he having bought the right of Thomas Runchey, J. H. McKenzie and M. J. McKenzie, who jointly held the Brant lease given before.



*ROBERT ANDERSON,  
Who took up Anderson Block.*



*CLAUDE ANDERSON,  
of Anderson Block,  
5th Generation.*

The first Patents issued to others, as given in the Registry Office, Cayuga, I give below, up to the close of the year 1849. These records were sent to the Registrar at Cayuga when the office was established there in 1850:

In 1846 a Patent to Philip Murray.

In 1847 Patents to Richard Farraday, James Runchey, and Wm. Young

In 1848 Patents to Jas. Thornton, Geo. Hunter, G. M. Rychman, Francis Graham, W. H. Nilles, and M. Harcourt.

In 1849 Patents to James McKean, Thos. Peart, Matthew Gill, S. Wolden, John Hobrook, and Robert Anderson.

Doubtless other "Patents" were issued, but not registered until the office in Cayuga was opened.

I saw one deed made in 1847, and not registered until 1851.

Consulting the Registry Office, it would seem that about all the land was deeded shortly after 1850, and numerous small lots sold at the little villages that sprang up with the advent of the many settlers.

Even before this date Mt. Healy, that owed its existence to the enterprise of John Donaldson, was a flourishing little hamlet, doing a lot of business with its saw mill, grist mill, plaster mill, blacksmith shop, carriage shop, hotel, etc. Ballsville had saw mills, carriage and blacksmith shop, stores, and hotel. Sunnyside, south of the River, at Caledonia, had shops, residences, and the Balmoral Grist Mill, now owned by the Caledonia Milling Co., was built in the early days by James Little, who figured in the municipal affairs of the Township in early years.

On the Town Line Decew Bros. operated two grist mills. A dam was built across the Creek on the Anderson Block, where a distillery and other mills flourished for a time.

At McKenzie Creek, on the Ardross Block, at an earlier date a mill was erected and ran by Thos. Runchey to grind corn and wheat for the Indians.

These different business places and the saw mills mentioned in another chapter, with the cordwood and lumber trade, made Oneida a busy, thriving place.

And we cannot forget that while comfortable homes were being established, and business enterprises prospering, the liquor traffic then considered necessary and important, but now banned as useless, was exerting a tremendous influence. Hotels for the comfort and convenience of the public were numerous and all doing much business, selling liquor of all kinds, debauching and degrading the frequenters of those places.

A sad history could be written of their evil doings, of the lives wasted, of the houses wrecked, of the farms lost through their pernicious influence.

When the Hamilton and Port Dover Plank Road was finished in 1844 some ten or more "drinking places" were erected between Caledonia and what is now Hagersville.

These places are remembered by the names of the men who kept them—Ringland's, Potter's, Doy'e & Ryan's, Wo den's, Ince's, Heim's, McCloy's, Lindley, Alma's, McDonald's, and McClusky's—are some of the names; but we remember the "Rising Sun," The Royal Oak, The Blue Hotel, etc. There was also one at Mt. Healy and one at Oneida Centre.

It is the proud boast of Oneida that it was one of first Ontario Municipalities to get rid of this evil trade.

With the settlement of the Township, the educational and religious interests of the people were attended to. Log school houses were built as the sections were mapped out, and these were filled by the boys and girls from five or six years of age to young men and women of twenty or more.

These were taught by men or women whose salaries averaged in the year 1844 8 pounds, 6 shillings, 1 pence.

The names of the first teachers were: Ephraim H. Shourds, Sarah Hennesy, Hugh Kennedy, Jacob Wintemute, Sarah Bulmer. These teachers, while poorly paid, succeeded in inspiring many of the boys and girls under their care with a desire to learn, and in after years they did themselves and their teachers credit.

There were eleven sections formed in the Township, and continued until 1880, when S. S. No. 6, a separate school, ceased to exist. And when Hagersville was incorporated in 1886, Number 9 became a part of a Union Section in the village.

In 1845-1846 the total expenses for schools was 44 pounds, 16 shillings. An amount appears in the Common School accounts of 1844 of 3 pounds' salary for Superintendent.



*ALEX. WINRAM,  
Superintendent of  
Schools.*



*THOMAS MARTINDALE,  
Who Introduced Shorthorns  
in 1859-1861.*

A Mr. Winram, living near Decew's Mills, was the first man whose name I find that filled that position. The cut gives a good picture. As I remember him, then an old man, inspecting our schools and his advice. "Make hay while the sun shines," I have never forgotten. The log school houses give place to neat brick ones years after. A number of these are still doing duty as places of



*SCHOOL HOUSE, S. S. NO. 2.*

learning, but S. S. No. 2 and S. S. No. 5 boasts of the latest and most modern building and equipment.

As the school buildings have improved the salaries of the teachers have increased, so that as I am writing I learn of young women being engaged for the next term at salaries ranging from \$800 to \$1,000.

Great credit is due the parents for their care in sending their children to school. And our splendid school system deserves our praise; but the efficiency and zeal of the teachers in the passing years has been the principal factors in establishing the standard we now enjoy. I think not a single voter in Oneida requires his ballot marked, and not a home that does not keep posted by the secular and religious press. Ignorance that is a menace to the public weal, and the mother of crime does not exist, Oneida has a creditable record through her schools, and has sent out into the world numbers of *clever* men and women to take their places in many walks of life.

The children of 50 years ago found it very difficult to pursue their studies, being engaged on the farm and in the house—during the days helping tired fathers and mothers—and when evening came, without lamps or gas to read by, we used to draw near the stove or fireplace, with a supply of pine knots, which, when burning, gave us light to study by.

In the political realm Oneida has not figured very prominently.

A. W. Thompson in 1880-1884, John Senn in 1894, and D. Z. Gibson in 1915 were aspirants for Provincial honors, but failed to secure election, only one of whom had a majority of votes, and he disclaimed his right to a seat when a protest was filed against him as an issuer of marriage licenses.

In military matters Oneida has not been behind other Townships.

In 1866, when the Fenian Raid took place, a number of men who were members of the Rifle Companies in Caledonia and York, went with their Companies and the Queen's Own of Toronto met and drove back the invaders.

It would be difficult to find a better class of men than those who took part in that engagement, and who were quartered in Sarnia in 1870 when another invasion was expected.

The following men served in the Volunteer Force of the Caledonia and York Rifle Companies at the time of the Fenian Raid and took part in the action that day.

A grant of 160 acres of land in New Ontario was made to each man, and afterwards a bonus of \$100 each.

*From Oneida-York Rifles:* Sergeant, James Thorburn. Corporals—T. G. Fearmen, B. Griffith, Nelles. Privates—Thomas Bailey, P. Anderson, John Anderson, Jon. Calverly, R. R. Cranston, Jno. Griffith, Fred. Hotchkiss, Geo. Nelles, James T. Nelles, Geo. Pearson, John Pearson, Jacob Runchey, A. Sweetman.

*Caledonia Rifle Company:* Sergeant—Robt. Thorburn. Privates—J. Thorburn, Thos. Young.

A pure White Marble Tablet in the Town Hall bears the names of the men from Oneida who went overseas to aid the Motherland in the terrible war of 1914-1918. And a page in this book tells the names of those who fell in the great conflict. Their names are also chiselled on a Granite Monument in the Town Hall lot.

#### FELL IN ACTION.

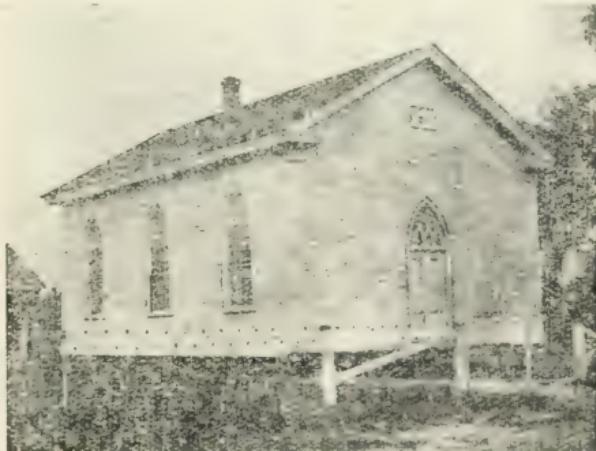
Bowditch, John	Laidlaw, Peter
Buntin, Harry	Purvis, Albert
Groat, Peter	Prescott, John
Hanna, Joseph	Pegg, Horace
Johnston, Timothy	Reid, Earl

Coming with, or closely following the early settlers were the Missionaries or Clergymen of the various religious bodies, whose zeal for the cause of Christ and the welfare of the men and women who were compelled to leave these sacred places of worship and their religious instructors was commendable and heroic.

I cannot pay sufficient tribute to those self-denying men and women who came and gladly shared the danger and privation of the people among whom they settled. They preached in the school houses and private homes as they had opportunity, and urged and helped to build churches where they seemed necessary. I can point to nine different places in Oneida where churches stood and where the people gathered for worship, namely:

On McKenzie Road on the Third Concession; at Mt. Healy; at Peart's; at Anderson's School House; two at or near Decew's Mills, and one at Gill and one at the Gore. These last named two are still standing; the rest have been merged into other circuits at central points.

The Gill Church was built in 1862, and for nearly sixty years has been a centre of influence for good.



*GILL CHURCH, BUILT IN 1862.*

The Clanbrassil Church was built in 1855, and the new brick one built in 1902, with such men as John Knox, J. Baird, Ed. Rutherford, and A. Stark as Elders at the beginning, it has prospered and was never stronger than it is now. With its splendid array of men as Ministers we would expect nothing less. Rev. James Black of Caledonia took up the work and was followed by Rev. A. Grant, Caswell Turnbull, Smith, and Rev. C. B. Pitcher, B. A., is efficiently serving a loyal and devoted membership.

## *General*

THE population of the Township was reported one year at 3,200, but has fallen off until this year it is reported at 1,214.

Part of this difference is accounted for by Hagersville's incorporation in 1886, as quite a number of families resided there and are reported in their Roll.

Other causes were operating to make this difference.

A number of men with large families lived in dwellings at Mt. Healy, Ballsville and other places throughout the Township, who never owned land, but were very useful residents, working in mills, shops and for farmers cutting wood, etc. With the closing of the mills, shops, and the supply of wood gone, these men with their families left for other spheres of labor.

Many men owning large farms bought the smaller holdings, or farms, near them, which could be worked with the improved farm machinery by their own sons and very little hired help.

These two classes were, many of them, syphoned away to the United States, where the well-established manufacturers were offering strong inducements to these Canadians, who were desirable laborers and mechanics.

Both urban and rural municipalities suffered by this drain. The additions to the cities and certain towns more nearly represents a normal growth, and not the drawing away from the country because of the severe and unprofitable conditions on the farm.

A fair illustration of the loss of population may be found in S. S. No. 2, where six houses have been torn down, formerly used by laborers and their families, and six by small farms sold. And now in 1920 about 100 men owned nearly one half of the 32,500 acres, and these employ very little hired help.

Another cause of rural depopulation is the lower birth rate. Perhaps less than half the number of children per family now than there were 40 or 50 years ago.

And it may be true that a larger number of the bright boys and girls from the country are lured to the towns and cities by the inviting positions they are so well qualified to fill.

We do not begrudge the marts of trade, the halls of science, the learned professions, or the pulpits of our land these virile sons of the farm, as they are repaying in good coin and with legal interest these places that gave us some of our best pioneers.

If we could look back to the social conditions existing 75 years ago and see the barn raisings, the logging bees, manure bees, paring bees, which nearly all ended with a dance, or kissing bees, we could form our own opinion of the song we sometimes sing:

"There is no time like the old time  
When you and I were young."

I would like the young people who read these lines to see an old fashioned "logging bee."

Imagine eight or 10 acres of brush or logs on the edge of the woods that was cut during the winter and spring, had dried so that in June or July the fire started, soon raged furiously, licking up all but the larger logs, or timber. What a blackened, sorry spectacle it presented. Little wonder, that the owner fearing to face the task alone, should invite help from his neighbors near and far to "log" or pile up the mass for burning.

Groups of strong men came; some brought their oxen, so well fitted for this work of drawing the logs to the heaps.

Often captains were chosen and a strip of fallow staked out to each, who had selected a number of men, or a team, when a mad race would start. Stalwart men, whom I am sorry to say, were stimulated with what was then known as pure, cheap whiskey, worked with a desperation to win. To an onlooker the scene was bewildering. The shouting of the captains and the ox drivers and the general confusion that seemed to prevail I cannot describe.

But night generally found the work well done. The long rows of log heaps were ready to burn when they had dried a few days.

Frequently at night a social time was held, for often wives and daughters had gathered to show their friendship and accompany their husbands and friends home.

It would not be fair or true to include all the settlers in one class, who would supply the beverage above named, for many of them were true to their lofty ideals of life, who were ever ready to assist their neighbors at their "bees," but refused to indulge in these questionable practices.

An old resident related to me years ago this incident: Having a fallow to log he sought help, telling his neighbors manfully that no liquor would be furnished, and was met with the rebuff "that no work would be done," as few would come. They came, did more work than at other times, went home earlier than usual well satisfied. This led others to adopt the same plan, and helped to spread a sentiment abroad that has been a credit to Oneida.

All honor to the men and women who dared to stand for right and seemly things even when opposed by their friends and neighbors.

It is hard for the young people of today to get a proper conception of the toil, privation and hardship endured by the first settlers in the Township.

Many of these came from comfortable homes in older sections of Canada, or from good homes in the British Isles, who must have felt keenly the contrast.

Here they had small log houses and very little furniture or house furnishing, but they bravely accepted the conditions and bent all their energies to make comfortable homes, adding to their effects as they could, living frugally, while they toiled to the limit of their strength. In the house the wife and mother prepared the food and clothing, picking the wool, and often carding the rolls, then spinning the yarn for stockings, sometimes weaving the cloth and drying it, then she cut the garments and sewed them together (without a sewing machine), and felt pleased when all the family was fitted out with new clothes of her own make. Mothers wore the comfortable flannel dresses. And many a comely young woman was courted and won who knew very little of any other wearing apparel than that made by herself and mother.

I remember a lady and her husband who regularly passed our home going to divine service, both of them clad in homespun and homemade clothes, who, though toiling hard through the week failed not on the Sabbath to go to a place of worship. They lived respected and beloved, and their lives have still a blessed influence over their children and neighbors. This was not a special case.

But, how to provide food and clothing of this kind, was often a serious task.

Every new arrival in the home, while they were fondly embraced and welcomed, added to the anxiety and effort needed for their support.

I remember the furniture of over sixty years ago, the hand-made, bark, bottomed chairs; the spinning wheel, whose merry hum chorded with the sweet mother songs of those years, or the modest love songs of sisters as they filled the "spindle" with smooth, even yarn and then wound it on "reel" that measured it and clicked when a knot was made.

I bare my head to the old pine cradle that father and mother rocked, that for over twenty years was constantly filled with its cooing, crowing or crying occupant. And I almost lament the departure of the folding "bunk" that we used for seats till nightfall, when it was opened out and the comfortable bed that was enclosed spread out, that made such a cosy resting place for two, three, and sometimes four children. And I often say with the poet:

Backward, turn backward. Oh, time, in your flight,  
Make me a child again just for one night !

I need not describe the other household effects that gave us comfort and contentment then.

All that love and toil could do to make home comfortable was done by mother, while father did his part to clear and fence the land to sow the crop and cut it. And what a contrast in his work and that of sons and grandsons of today.

With a scythe he mowed the hay and raked it up with a hand rake.

With a cradle he cut the grain and bound it by hand, and often threshed it with a "flail," or laid it on the floor and made the horses or cattle tread it out.

I stood by the wire fence today and saw a large "tractor" plowing so smooth and fast, a field (of lucerne sod) that only a little over sixty years ago was plowed by a yoke of oxen, that slowly formed their way around stones, stumps and some patches of brush. And I did not desire a return to childhood days, but sincerely honored the men of that time who toiled under such difficult conditions.

Now, my task is ended. I sincerely hope that an abler man may soon correct and continue this history of Oneida, and that the kind reader will find some pleasure in looking over these pages. It has been a great delight to me to arrange it, as it has given me much information and knowledge of the past.



*A HAPPY FAMILY.*

I YIELD to the opinion of a friend I respect, who writes that a book of this character should not publish advertisements. I give as history the names of men who have this important business in hand:

*DAIRY SHORTHORNS*

F. R. MARTINDALE

Caledonia

R. R. No. 3

COLLINS YOUNG & SONS

Caledonia

R. R. No. 4

D. Z. GIBSON

Caledonia

R. R. No. 3

HUGH SCOTT

Caledonia

R. R. No. 3

JAMES M. McCONACHIE

Caledonia

R. R. No. 3

JAMES McCONACHIE

Hagersville

R. R. No. 3

G. & W. DUNNET

Hagersville

R. R. No. 3

W. S. DUNNET

Hagersville

R. R. No. 3

A. A. SMITH

Hagersville

R. R. No. 3

PEART BROS

Caledonia

R. R. No. 3

DAIRY SHORTHORNS

ROBT. & WM. HARPER

Caledonia

R. R. No. 3

BEEF SHORTHORNS

ALLAN ANDERSON & SON

Caledonia

R. R. No. 3

ELWOOD R. DENNIS

Cayuga

R. R. No. 5

HOLSTEINS

HARRY J. ANDERSON

Caledonia

R. R. No. 3

JERSEYS

ERNEST A. CRADDOCK

Hagersville

R. R. No. 3

AYRSHIRES

ROBERT W. SMITH

Hagersville

R. R. No. 3

POLLED ANGUS

E. S. PEART & SON

Caledonia

R. R. No. 3

R. F. DUNCAN

Caledonia

R. R. No. 3

AUCTIONEERS

JAMES S. FLEMING

Cayuga

R. R. No. 4

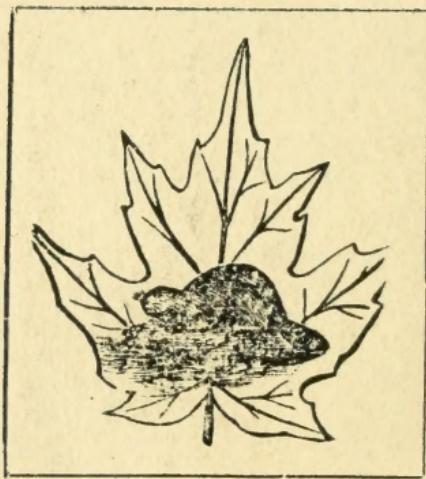
F. W. FORSTER

Caledonia

R. R. No. 3







11

F  
5547  
0584

Senn, John  
Township of Oneida

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